

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicant appreciates the allowance of claims 1-24.

A new claim 30 has been added directed to the invention exemplified by the seventh embodiment, described at page 34, line 2 to page 35, line 7 with reference to FIG. 14.

Claim 25 has been amended to clarify the antecedence of the terms "designated character sequences" and "stored messages" and to clarify that the "concerned messages" are a subset of the stored messages. Dependent claims 26-28 have also been amended for clarification and for consistency with claim 25 .

Claims 25-28 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Vanden Heuvel in view of Helferich and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,239,679 to Murai (hereinafter "Murai"). For the following reasons, the rejection is again respectfully traversed.

Regarding amended claim 25, neither Vanden Heuvel nor Helferich teaches or suggests "erasing concerned messages collectively, *the concerned messages being those of the stored messages that contain the designated character sequences.*" As amended, claim 25 now clearly distinguishes from Vanden Heuvel and Helferich.

In the Office action, the Examiner acknowledges that Vanden Heuvel does not disclose "erasing concerned messages collectively when designated character sequences are contained in stored messages." Thus, the Examiner cites Helferich for teaching the erasing of messages.

Helferich teaches erasing messages in response to a user selection of an erase function for a selected message. In the presently claimed invention, messages are collectively deleted *if they contain a designated character sequence*, without the need for a user to individually select messages for deletion, as in Helferich. Therefore, Helferich does not teach or suggest erasing those messages that contain

designated character sequences, as required by claim 25. Since every limitation of the claim is not taught or suggested by Vanden Heuvel, Helferich, or a combination thereof, claim 25 is patentable over the prior art of record. Further, since claims 26-28 depend from claim 25, they are patentable for the same reasons.

Further, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 25-28 are patentable for the reasons stated in the previous "Response to Office Action" (paper no. 13). This argument is further supported by the following remarks.

In the "Response to Arguments" in the current Office action, the Examiner quotes Helfrich at column 10, lines 19-44, and concludes that "Clearly, Helferich discloses that erase message function erases the selected messages." Applicant respectfully disagrees. Helfrich does not disclose deleting selected messages. Helfrich does specifically refer to selecting multiple messages for the step of forwarding at step 112: "One or more messages may be selected by the user to be forwarded to one or a plurality of users at step 112" (column 10, lines 25-29). On the other hand, Helfrich refers to a single message with regard to erasing at step 116 and replying at step 117: "At step 116, the selected message may be erased and at step 117, a reply may be sent to the originator of a selected message" (*emphasis added*, column 10, lines 36-38). It should be appreciated that, using conventional techniques, it would be impractical to allow a user to reply to more than message at the same time. This further supports the view that the discussion of selecting multiple messages relates only to the forwarding step 112. Further, since steps 116 and 117 are group into a single sentence in the disclosure of Helfrich, it is clear that both are intended to operate on only a single selected message. Moreover, Helfrich never states that multiple messages can be selected for erasing.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

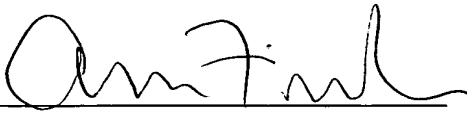
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Respectfully submitted,

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